



Consultation decision: Seasonal closure of the crawfish fishery in ICES area 7 (English waters)

Background

Following previous seasonal closures introduced for the crawfish fishery, MMO has consulted on a closure proposal for 2025/2026. The closure's purpose is to enhance the protection of spawning crawfish by reducing fishing-related removals and interactions, thereby supporting the settlement of juvenile stocks and mitigating the risk of nets being left to soak for extended periods or lost during unpredictable winter weather.

Consultation

The consultation ran from 5 June to 20 July 2025. A closure would prohibit fishing for; retaining on board; storing; or landing crawfish caught in English waters of ICES area 7 for all UK and EU vessels using all gear types.

Consultation outputs

MMO will implement a closure of the crawfish fishery from **17 November 2025 to 31 May 2026** inclusive, in English waters of ICES area 7 (map provided).

The decision has been made with consideration of the consultation responses, scientific evidence, social and economic impact of the closure and relevant legislation and policy.

This is a longer closure compared to previous years and will increase protection for berried and juvenile crawfish whilst also taking account of socio-economic considerations. This reflects the call from stakeholders to increase the length of the closure and allows MMO to monitor for socio-economic impacts given the decreased fishing opportunities in the South West.

Please refer to the **[decision document](#)** for further information, including a summary of responses received and further reasoning behind this decision.

MMO values the suggestions made for technical measures. To give those involved in the fishery certainty for business planning and allow required notification processes we have decided to announce the seasonal closure now without any technical measures included.

Contact us

If you have any queries, then please contact MMO's Fisheries Management Team using the email address provided here: **FMP@marinemanagement.org.uk**.

